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STATINTL

Nixon's Boo-Boo

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"OH, THAT mine adversary had written a book"—Job 11:35.

THE WHOLE Democratic Party, along with President Kennedy, can be excused if they quote this passage from the Bible in light of the chief controversy growing out of former Vice President's new effort, "Six Crises."

Nixon's accusation that Kennedy had used a CIA briefing on the impending Cuban invasion in campaign oratory shapes up as an election-year bonus for the Democrats.

THE KENNEDY Administration's handling of the affair figured to occupy a major portion of Republican criticism this fall, but the Nixon book, in addition to drawing a defense of Kennedy from former CIA Director Allen Dulles, may well serve to blunt the persuasiveness of the GOP attack.

In the first place, it nails down beyond a doubt the fact the Cuban affair had its genesis in the Eisenhower Administration.

Secondly, it records in Nixon's own words an admission of his extensive involvement in the high-level discussions leading to the decision to arm and train the Cuban exiles.

Third, it emphasizes Nixon's own position that the decision to launch the anti-Castro attempt was correct, and that the error was not in using force at all but in not committing enough to win.

THIS THIRD POINT is likely to provide considerable fodder for the campaign this fall, with Republicans

arguing that the original decision to use force was right, but that Kennedy doomed the mission by failing to give adequate air support.

The Democrats, particularly the liberals among them, are likely to take the line that Kennedy's mistake was not in failing to use enough force, but in resorting to force at all in violation of U.S. treaty commitments.

The fact Nixon himself put forward this very argument in one of the campaign TV debates will not deter them from using it. After all, Nixon says in the new book he was forced by Kennedy to take that position, in order to protect the Cuban plans "at all costs."

ALREADY THE ADMISSION by Nixon that he had to go to the "other extreme" of what he really believed is rekindling the old "Tricky Dick" criticisms that Democrats peddled so hard against him in 1960.

It was not necessary to go to the other extreme to protect the mission, they argue; he could have done so simply by taking a noncommittal stand.

But it was in character, Democrats would have the voter believe, that he chose to go all the way, attacking Kennedy for advocating a "wrong and irresponsible" course that, it turned out, Nixon himself had advocated—not in debate, but at the highest level of national decision-making.

DEMOCRATS GENERALLY have considered the Cuban fiasco their biggest campaign problem in the coming congressional elections. Now they are beginning to feel they will be hurt all right, but not so much as they had expected before their adversary wrote this book.